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1-12-2011

Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Recommended Citation

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee, "Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Wednesday, January 12, 2011" (2011). *Professional Standards Committee Minutes*. Paper 37.
http://scholarship.rollins.edu/as_ps/37

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PSC Meeting Minutes: January 12, 2011

Attendance:

- Members: David Charles, Richard James, Emily Russell, Joshua Almond, Marc Fetscherin, Carlee Hoffman, Steven St. John, Dorothy Mays, and Claire Strom.
- Dean of Faculty Representative: Not present

Meeting Convened: 3:00pm

Announcements:

- Approval of last week's minutes: Minutes approved.

Old Business:

- Grant policies
 - Two issues: PSC members recusing themselves when there is a perceived conflict of interest and the turning of the grant review process over to another tenured group.
 - David - I'm against turning it over. Reading through all the grants is a good learning experience. It's also nice to see what others are doing. Turning them over might send the message that untenured have something to worry about.
 - Marc - From a content point of view, PSC is about faculty standards. Grants are not standards. It seems like it should be a separate committee. It would free up lots of time for PSC to handle their real business.
 - Claire - I agree. We also recently inherited the stud/faculty collaborative grants process.
 - Josh - The grant review process seems to have become more contentious and, as an untenured member, recent history has certainly made me feel vulnerable.
 - Marc - With our new grant director [Devon Massot], it might be good time to set up a separate committee.
 - Claire - If we recommend it be removed from PSC, then we can focus back on the nature of PSC.
 - David - There seems to be a glut of committees already. This is also one of the things most interesting about this committee.
 - Marc - But, really, it's already a subset of the committee. No minutes are taken, for example.
 - Claire - Coming back to the issue of workload and the creation of another committee, we've inherited one and are about to receive another set of grants to review. If we had a committee that was only doing grants, we could have them do all the grants (Cornell for example) that might actually reduce the number of overall committees.
 - Emily - Grants are what's attractive to me about this committee.
 - Dorothy - A lot of what this committee does is professional standards. These grants make it more interesting and I learn a lot. These grants help us to establish these standards across the college by getting a better understanding of what everyone is doing.
 - Claire - As the current chair, I'm concerned that we're not going to get done what we need to do. What I'm hearing is that we should leave these alone but we do need to deal with the issue we encountered last fall. Do you think we should

proceed with PSC members recusing themselves if they have a grant in the mix?

- Marc - What are your thoughts (to Steve and Dick)?
- Dick - I tend to agree with most of what has been said but I do fear this trend being established of you review this and you review that.
- Claire - I remembered the potential new grant - a course release grant. PSC will evaluate this, too. We will have doubled our grant load in less than two years.
- Dick - Is there any other standing committee that hands out money? (No)
- Claire - Just to give you a comparison of workload: Finance and Services meets monthly. A possible solution might be that half of the PSC committee could act as the grant subcommittee in fall and the other half in spring.
- David - I might be disincentive to be on the committee for those who are active grant producers
- Claire - Not necessarily. I do think with the increased amount of competition and the decrease in funding, I think we ought to have an official recommendation of recusing just to convey a commitment to impartiality.
- Emily - I like a recommendation that allows us to step back and take a look at the importance of the situation.
- Claire - How about: due to the increased competitive nature of grants, PSC recommends that any member of committee that is applying for a grant should recuse themselves from the process?
- Dick - Where will that appear?
- Claire - I think it ought to be included in language of the grants.
- Marc - If it is not in the description, it may lead to a conflict of interest. I don't see any reason why any future committee should deal with it.
- Claire - I agree, the Cornell committee is made up of people who cannot apply for the grant.
- Dick - Could we pick from a pool of people that got the grants previously but who are either not applying or are not eligible to apply who act as reviewers for the new grants subcommittee?
- Marc - Then we take from the group of folks who within the last three years that got a grant but are not applying now and we pick a group to act as subcommittee.
- Dick - I see us using Marc's suggestion. A PSC member would act as a representative on that standing subcommittee and relate PSC concerns/interests.
- Emily - Can we flip this around and approach other constituencies to see how people and other entities think/feel?
- Claire - It is a touchy issue so, yes, I think it best we discuss this with others to see what their thinking is. I'll bring it to EC and see what they say. As for this spring, we're going to have a whole lot of issues to deal with. Grants are due Jan 21. With the Faculty/Student grants due March 1. Let's schedule the first grant meeting for February 23 2pm-6pm.
- Feedback to admin
 - Claire - The only outstanding issue was who had access to the Zoomerang survey. The president is happy to have Matt Hawks administer the survey and give him and his superiors access. One thing Lewis really wanted was to have things go

in the same direction (ie: bad to good or qualify to unqual). The other question for the group is when we send these out, we need to have an introductory paragraph. I'd like to include "The survey will be made available to HR and the administrator. The administrator will communicate his/her response to the faculty in some manner."

- o Committee agrees

New Business

- Adjunct pay
 - o Claire - Deb couldn't join us but she sent a hand out of thoughts. What should we do with issue #1 or issue #3? We can just recommend an increase.
 - o Dick - I would like to view any increase in pay to be performance based rather than time served based.
 - o Claire - That leads to the problem of oversight and assessment of the quality of teaching by adjuncts. There's no review process.
 - o Dick - I would be interested in a more established process where an adjunct works for a full time faculty member so a faculty member is assigned to an adjunct and they give them syllabus, oversight, etc...
 - o Claire - According to the Dean, she'd like to see adjuncts and overloads more attractive so we can better entice people to do it.
 - o David - For me this is a moral issue. This is embarrassing that we are paying this little to colleagues who are qualified and dedicated.
 - o Emily - Tying compensation to student enrollment is unethical and there are great disparities between departments in that regard.
 - o David - It is also pedagogically antithetical to what we are trying to do.
 - o Marc - Compensation is also too low. If we give a 25% increase, it would put values back to a competitive rate.
 - o Claire - We won't deal with the issue of increment pay but if we give a rate hike to the base pay, then everyone gets a raise.
 - o Dav - I like ideas of bumps, as well.
 - o Claire - We advocate raising all numbers 25%. After that they get a base raise just like all other faculty.
 - o Marc - Taking into account inflationary increases over 15 years, it would be a total of approx 44% increase.
 - o David - I also like the idea of communicating our concern about pay being tied to enrollments.
 - o Claire - How about: "We recommend an increase but also communicate our concern about compensation being tied to enrollments". Two issues remain: what do we do with adjuncts over time and then what do we do with these recommendations? Do we bring them up to EC? I would have thought possible changes to Maymester would have to go back to AAC.
 - o Marc - Can we not link overload and adjunct increases to A&S increases?
 - o Claire - So, we recommend an increase in base pay for adjuncts & overloads by 25% and after that it be tied to A&S increases.
 - o Steve - I think we should include that the actual increase is 44% in our rationale.

- o Claire - I will draft a rough statement and circulate it this afternoon. Please provide thoughts and feedback before the EC meeting on 1/13.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30am